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DOH-PINELLAS RECOGNIZES DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH

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The Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County (DOH-Pinellas) recognizes November as **Diabetes Awareness Month**, a time set aside every year to raise awareness about diabetes and promote the importance of taking steps to confront

1 in 4

29 million Americans have diabetes and 1 in 4 don't know it.
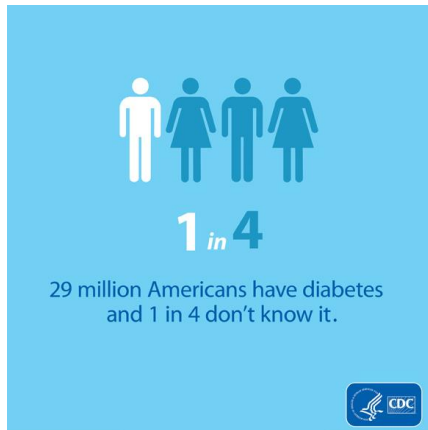
diabetes as a critical health issue. The theme for this year is *The Family and Diabetes*, strengthening the role of the family in the management, care, prevention, and education of diabetes.

In Pinellas, the 2018 Community Health Assessment found that 11 percent of 702 adults surveyed reported they had been told they had diabetes. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in four of Americans with diabetes are unaware that they have the disease.

The number of people diagnosed with diabetes has more than tripled in the last 20 years in the U.S. In Florida, it is estimated that over 2.4 million people have diabetes and over 5.8 million have prediabetes. Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in Florida.

There are three main types of diabetes: type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes (diabetes while pregnant). Women with diabetes have more difficulty conceiving and may have poor pregnancy outcomes, so it is especially important for women to be aware of their risk factors for developing diabetes, including having a family history of diabetes as well as age, weight, and physical activity level.

Due to better treatments, people with diabetes are now living longer—and with a better quality of life—than ever before. Healthy lifestyles can also reduce the impact that diabetes may have on your life. A blood test from your health care provider can determine if you have diabetes. Early treatment can prevent serious problems diabetes can cause, such as loss of eyesight or kidney damage.

When your blood sugar is higher than normal but not high enough yet to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes you may be at risk for prediabetes. Prediabetes is a serious health condition that increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Eighty-six million American adults have prediabetes. Nine out of 10 people with prediabetes don't know they have it. Fortunately, making healthy lifestyle choices can delay or prevent type 2 diabetes and other serious health problems. A simple blood

sugar test to find out if you have prediabetes. Talk to your health care provider if you should be tested.

DOH-Pinellas works with community partners on the Community Resource Bus, an initiative to improve community health. Partners provide screenings that include diabetes testing at underserved neighborhoods in St. Petersburg. The agency also offers diabetes management classes for newly diagnosed diabetics on a regular schedule.

To learn more about diabetes prevention and self-management, visit www.floridahealth.gov/diabetes. For more information about National Diabetes Month, visit International Diabetes Federation American Diabetes Association National Diabetes Month 2018 Toolkit.

For information about DOH-Pinellas, go to www.PinellasHealth.com and follow us on Twitter @HealthyPinellas.

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About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board, works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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